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ABSTRACT

Models of record keeping strategies for reading and writing are presented in this booklet. "Why Records Should Be Kept" discusses the importance and advantages of keeping accurate records of pupil progress; "Commercially Available Materials" lists many of the record systems available from commercial textbook publishers; "Record-Keeping for Teachers--Reading" lists a variety of sources for the specific skills a student needs and ways to test for them, presents a form for reporting a student's reading test scores, and lists the four levels of reading; "Record Keeping for Teachers--Writing" provides a list of writing skills; "Record-Keeping by Language Arts Areas" discusses how card files can be useful in maintaining student progress records and includes two sample cards; and "Uses of These Techniques in Other Areas" examines ways of transferring the record-keeping in the language arts to keeping records in other academic areas. (WR)

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RECORD-KEEPING AND CHECKLISTS

FOR

READING AND WRITING

METHODS FOR KEEPING TRACK OF INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS

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I. Why Records Should be Kept

The importance of keeping accurate student records cannot be overemphasized. As the advantages of individualized instruction become more and more discernible, the need for periodic checks of student progress becomes evident. It is easily demonstrated in the language arts that each student has a different rate of development and reaches points of preparedness at times different than those other students around him. A single teacher cannot hope to remember the reading level, reading skill deficiencies, scribal fluency level, and specific language usage inadequacies of every student who passes through the classroom in one day; to sequence those objectives the student should be prepared for and coordinate the materials necessary for instruction according to each student's need; and then to plan instructional units in every subject each day. With comprehensive, daily records, this is difficult; from memory, impossible.

For this reason, models of various record-keeping strategies are being provided. This is not intended as a definitive answer to the problems of keeping an accurate record of student progress and needs, but it may help provide some direction as to how it can be accomplished. One of the advantages of a formalized record-keeping system is that it aids greatly in sequencing instruction, and, once a teacher's proficiency develops, cuts down considerably on planning time.

II. Commercially Available Materials

Many series have very good systems as part of their package. Houghton-Mifflin's Interaction series and the Thinking Skills - Language Program from Innovative Sciences both have ways of checking individual student progress and recording it as well as being excellent reading and language programs. The Interaction series' record-keeping system is generalized enough to allow for inclusion of information gleaned from other sources. However, it does not relate to specific skills, but rather to general goals and will not therefore provide the tightly structured sequence which is probably desired for teaching specific skills either remedially or developmentally. The "Think" program has just the opposite problem. It provides a specific sequence for skill development, but relates only to itself.

Science Research Associates (SRA) has a package which does not purport to teach anything but is probably the most adequate testing device available. It is called, appropriately enough, Diagnosis. At this writing only Level A is available, but it is anticipated that Level B will be on the market very soon. Level A covers those skills most people view as necessary for grades 1-4; Level B has 3-6. That is the

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only failing of the material, unless future packages became available for the higher levels. Not only does Diagnosis provide the teacher with an analysis of student needs in specific skills, but a Prescription Guide is included which tells a teacher where to find instructional units for each of those skills in nine different series including Ginn and Company, Harper and Row, Houghton-Mifflin, Macmillan, SRA, and Scott-Foresman. Making frequent checks of student progress and recording it is relatively easy and substantially more than adequate, but data other than that gathered with the materials cannot be recorded and, some types of necessary information are not included.

Those are all primarily for reading. Nothing has come to our attention which provides a check list of writing skills, which is not to say one does not exist.

III. Record-Keeping for Teachers - Reading

Since lists of the specific skills a student needs and ways to test for them are readily available from a variety of sources and at a variety of costs, only a list of sources is included here:

1. "Quickie Tests for Reading," Cross-Cultural Education Unit, State Department of Education
2. Diagnosis, SRA
3. Fountain Valley "Scope and Sequence"
4. Gates-McKillop "Reading Diagnostic Tests," Teachers College, Columbia University
5. Durrell "Analysis of Reading Difficulty," Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich
6. "Learning Assistance Inventory," Urban Education Press, Palo Alto, California
7. Innumerable others, including any professional text on the teaching of reading.

The most important thing is to keep a file on each student. There, each test and the student's work may be kept. It would also be helpful to keep a cover sheet which would tally results of all tests so that an overview of each individual's progress and problems are available at a glance. A form something like the following one could be used.

Suggested Reporting Form for use with Student Reading Test Scores

Frankie Zappa
Student Name

Test Used - Gr. Level	Date	Compreh.	Speed	%Error	Comments: (Special problems, error patterns)
IRI 5?	9/4	5 - [illegible] 6 - [illegible] 7 - 60%	125 115 100	3 10 25	[illegible]
Durrell 5-8	10/4	5 - 100% 6 - 100% 7 - 75% 8 - 50%	140 130 125 100	5 5 15 25	lip movement on silent reading irregular pauses orally - eye span better - still needs work - blends OK
Diagnosis Probes 15 & 16	10/6	—	—	—	15 possessive & plural endings OK ing, er, ed, est - OK
					16 trouble with prefixes im-, be- and suffix -ous. all others O.K.
class observation oral reading /4	10/8	OK	OK	few	phrasing better - still stumbles on blends - check therapist - eye span on easy material encouraged

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The teacher should also be sure to make periodic checks, perhaps monthly, of the students' various reading levels. There are basically four levels which the student has and should be utilized by the teacher depending upon which type of instruction is to take place. In order of difficulty, there are:

1. At the "Basal" or "Independent" level, the child can read comfortably on his own, being able to pronounce 95 percent or more of the vocabulary, and reading with 90 percent or better comprehension. This level is best for free reading and subject matter areas.

2. The "Instructional" or "Learning" level sees the student able to pronounce 90 percent of the vocabulary with 75 percent or better comprehension. Materials at this level of student proficiency are best used in situations where help is readily available such as oral reading and small groups. It is not advised for free reading but can be used in teaching subject matter and for reading instruction.

3. The "Frustration" level should only be used to point out specific skill deficiencies. Having a student read material at this level will probably accomplish nothing and may do more harm than good. A student's frustration level is revealed when he is unable to pronounce at least 90 percent of the vocabulary and comprehends only 50 percent.

4. "Capacity" or "Listening" level refers to material which the student can comprehend with 75 percent accuracy if read to him. This is adequate for stories and lectures, so long as that imcomprehended 25 percent is adequately accounted for.

IV. Record-Keeping for Teachers - Writing

Since a list of writing skills is not readily available, one is included here as part of the checklist. With a model such as this sample provides, a teacher can maintain a running tabulation of a student's scribal output, checking proficiencies and deficiencies and thereby sequence instruction in such a way as to maximize class time and avoid wasting time by trying to teach the student something he is already proficient at. The list provided can be broken down further or have items added or subtracted as the teacher sees fit. The list is, however, fairly comprehensive in the delineation of writing skills.

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
I. Fluency The student is able to demonstrate soribal fluency.															
II. Sentences The student demonstrates the concept of a sentence as a single thought unit.															
The student demonstrates the ability to write a complete sentence, including capital and end punctuation.															
The student demonstrates the absence of run-on sentences.															
The student demonstrates the absence of sentence fragments.															
The student demonstrates the ability to use a variety of sentence patterns A. N-V B. N-Va-N C. N-Vi-N D. N-Va-M E. N-Vi-M															
The student demonstrates the ability to incorporate prepositional phrases in sentences A. as adjectives B. as adverbs															
The student demonstrates the ability to make appropriate word choices. A. pronouns a. objective b. possessive c. nominative B. modifiers a. comparative b. superlative c. noun and determiner															
The student demonstrates the ability to achieve agreement A. pronoun-antecedent B. subject-verb C. word-modifier															
The student demonstrates the ability to handle tenses, single word verb - past, regular and irregular.															

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
The student demonstrates the ability to handle tenses - past, future, and perfect A. using an auxiliary B. using a form of "be" C. using a form of "do" D. agreement of subj. and aux.															
The student demonstrates the ability to use voice: A. active B. passive															
The student demonstrates the ability to use commas A. in introductory position B. in interrupting position C. in concluding position															
The student demonstrates the ability to use com. sent. parts A. subjects B. verbs C. objects D. modifiers															
The student demonstrates the ability to form and use a compound sentence, including a conjunction or semicolon.															
The student demonstrates the ability to use a dependent clause to form a complex sentence A. normal order B. inverted order															
The student demonstrates the ability to combine short sentences into contracted ones.															
III. Paragraph The student demonstrates the concept of a paragraph as the development of a single idea.															
The student demonstrates his ability to support generalized statements.															
The student demonstrates the ability to write a topic sent. in an expository paragraph.															

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
The student demonstrates the ability to achieve emphasis in a paragraph/in a sentence.															
The student demonstrates the ability to provide transition between sentences.															
The student demonstrates the ability to be consistent throughout a paragraph															
A. tense															
B. word choice															
C. language level															
The student demonstrates the ability to handle direct and indirect quotes.															
The student demonstrates the concept of and ability to use paragraphing in a dialogue.															
The student demonstrates the ability to write from differing points of view															
A. first person															
B. third person															
a. involved															
b. non-involved															
C. omnipotence															
The student demonstrates the ability to use various means of development in a paragraph															
A. details, examples															
B. importance															
C. contrast															
D. comparison															
E. anecdote															
F. chronology															
G. spatial															
H. characterization															
I. deductive															
J. inductive															
K. argumentation															
IV. Compositions The student demonstrates the ability to achieve order (see last point under paragraph).															
The student demonstrates the ability to provide transition between paragraphs.															
The student demonstrates the ability to achieve emphasis.															

All a teacher needs to do is put a check in the appropriate box when the student does whatever is said there, then move on and teach only those items not checked. The checklist can be used with any type of student writing assignment except poetry. It also allows the teacher to see at a glance what a particular student needs without going over previous writings and establishes a sequential order for instruction. The list is designed to judge only skill competency and organizational ability, not content, in such a way as to insure that a student can repeatedly demonstrate competence in a certain skill. This type of record-keeping eliminates the main trouble with normal testing procedures by allowing for repeated trials rather than a single one.

V. Record-Keeping by Language Arts Areas

Card files are also useful in maintaining student progress records. General areas can each be put on cards with specific skills listed under each area to be checked off when completed. Another approach might be to list all areas for a particular level on one card and again check them off when completed. This latter approach is probably less desirable since it would not do much for helping the teacher keep track of what specific skills each student needs to develop, but it is easier.

Sample cards might look like the following,

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Specific

Punctuation

Capitalization
Period with Abbreviation
End of Sentence
Question Mark
Exclamation Mark
Quotation Marks
Hyphen
Colon

Semicolon
Parentheses
Underlining
Apostrophes
Comma:
Series
Main Clause
Introductory Clause
Connectives
Appositives
Direct Address
Parenthetical Statement
Dates and Addresses

Name_____

General

Language Arts
Grade 4

Spelling:
Word lists
Letter Sounds
Prefixes
Suffixes
Syllabication

Grammar:
Noun
Verb
Adjective
Adverb
Conjunction
Pronoun
Subject
Predicate

Name_____

Permanship
Punctuation
Writing:
Sentence
Paragraph
Creative
Narrative
Expository
Reading:
Comprehension
Speed
Pronunciation
Word Attack
Similes
Metaphors

VI. Uses of These Techniques in Other Areas

Without much extrapolation, it is easy to transfer the techniques used for record-keeping in the language arts to keeping records in other academic areas such as social studies or mathematics. The process is the same. The first thing a teacher in any discipline needs to do is either find or make a list of the skills necessary for adequate coverage of that discipline at a particular grade level or for the discipline generally. Put the list on a sheet of paper or an index card and provide some way of checking off each item as it is mastered. It is of utmost importance to remember that an item should be checked-off for a student only when that student has demonstrated his mastery of it, not simply when the unit of instruction is completed.